

**NYS TEMPORARY COMMISSION TO PREVENT CHILDHOOD
DROWNING**

**FRIDAY, August 11, 2023
9:30-11:30 AM**

Minutes

Reminder to start the recording of the meeting
The meeting was called to order.

Commissioners Present

- **Brian Tobin**
- **Mike Switalski**
- **Marrick McDonald**
- **Kaitlin Krause***
- **Gwen McNamara**
- **Kevin Clark**
- **Casper Lassiter**

Absent

Heidi Reiss
Kathryn Colglazier

Kaitlin Krause did not count towards quorum as they were not in a public location in the state of New York. There were no votes taken that were a determining factor in the final report due at the end of this commission.

OTHER ATTENDEES:

- **Timothy Shay**
- **Steve Langendorfer**
- **Michael Bauer**
- **Rich Alden**
- **Shawn Slevin**
- **Bobby Hayson**
- **Jennifer Maglieneti**
- **Annie Cooper**
- **Joel Freeman**
- **Kristy Peterson**
- **Alex Crichton**
- **Carla Merilus**
- **Jennifer Maglienti**
- **Marla Diamond**
- **News 12**
- **News**

Reminder: Commissioners need to be on camera. The volume needs to be unmuted.

Your complete name needs to be displayed.

Guidelines: Public Participation:

Approval of Minutes from the previous meeting

Motion: Kevin Clark

Seconded: Mike Switalski

Motion Carried

Guest Speaker: Rich Alden, Director of Water Safety, NY State Parks

Learn to Swim has Twenty-seven facilities up until COVID, this year we have seven locations but need to consider what are the available resources as well as where the need is. This is a free program and works to serve additional communities that do not provide free lessons and undercut them. Riverbank and Saratoga Springs. One issue from a patron's standpoint is that there were people coming for a day trip. Water Safety education is challenging when people are not attending consistently.

We found that lifeguards were teaching without learning progressive skills in many locations. Therefore, trying to teach using Water Safety Instructors and work to create additional WSI classes. However, we were not able to pay additional for having the certification. Recognizing that these are young instructors ensures that we match them to appropriate age groups to help them relate and succeed better. Adult programs are a challenge when a large number of instructors are younger.

We are a public facility, therefore when people come in, it is not an option to let the public know that we have closed lanes for swimming lessons. This impacts the availability of swim lessons. The agency hired 1100 lifeguards but would ideally like another 100.

Needs

- Lifeguards
- WSI's
- Trainers

Mike: Manlius do they do anything for the socially impacted? Richard- with no payment, there is no buy-in. No option for receiving payment. Alternatives for completing the program but they continue to look at additional options.

Working to create a legacy program to develop lifeguards.

Mike- do you go outside the park system for training? Rich, they only have one pool and are dependent on third-party locations off-site for training/

Kate: Why do you think there is not a backup trainer academy? Since trainers are no longer mentored at the chapter, academies are not as available. As well as the mentality of a natural progression for people. Those that are taking a WSI class are already spoken for in.

Kate: we are 150 lifeguards short before being able to have a water safety education program. It is not as direct as that as it is location dependent and their turnover rate and what the needs are. There are areas that are historically difficult to staff.

Mike currently there are no classes on RCO (Red Cross Class posting service) in the Buffalo area.

Chat questions:

LG pay rates in Long Island Rich, there is a city bump, \$22per hour and the rest of the state is \$20 per hour

Information for programs to be sent to people who were not aware of the programs.

Fact sheet for NYS has about 7 organizations we except for swim instruction. Tim Shay, these are organizations that have come to the state for inclusion, and they are always open to additional programs.

Annie Cooper- it is deeply moving, and I am grateful at the work being done.

Marrick, are there any loopholes that other organizations that can come to the pools? Rich, there was a school group is not mandated to meet supervision regulations as they are not applicable on a field trip.

Approve 2024 Meeting Dates

2024

January 12

January 26

February 9

February 23

March 8

March 22

April 5

April 19

May 3

May 17

May 31

June 14

June 28
July 12
July 26
August 9
August 23
September 6
September 20
October 4
October 18
November 1
November 15
November 29 (The day after Thanksgiving)
December 6
December 20 - DUE DATE OF REPORT

Motion to accept the updated meeting days for the remainder of the commission timeline.

First Brian Tobin
Second Mike Switalski

No objections

Motion Carried

Discussion: - Where are we on each Goal?

Goal D: Underserved - Mike, Kevin, Casper

Mike, Casper, and Kevin. A new updated document will come out. There are some discussion points that we are looking for input from the commission.

- Dryland program for communities is this important.
 - Due to areas where adding additional pools or public lessons would be an option, therefore dryland education would be vital. Setting the standards for what items should be included and this provides the opportunity for a variety of existing programs to meet the intention.
- Issue that private facilities are renting their facility and offering swim lessons. We believe if they are offering lessons outside of their friends and families, they need to meet DOH expectations.
 - Since there is not standardization of aquatics expectations across the state and this may create a challenge for who would oversee this area.
- Culture sensitivity and inclusivity, in relation to DEI-
 - Recommendation included in the proposal.
 - Rich recommended that we remain on the fringe on any recommendations to avoid complications at public facilities.

Goal E: Awareness - Kathryn, Heidi, Kate
Tabled for the next meeting.

Goal A-1 & A-2: Age & Standards - Marrick; Goal Completed

Goal B: Feasibility & Effectiveness - Brian, Heidi

Intention was to reach out to aquatic professionals in each of the ten regions in the state with a set of questions. If there were ten meetings and then having additional meeting if someone could not attend one in their region. This would be a follow-up to the questionnaire that had been sent out to enable discussion versus short answer.

A list of the questions from the survey was shared with the commission.

Some challenges are getting people into certifications as well as pay for aquatic staff. This insight will be helpful as well as other unidentified challenges across the state that may contribute to efforts to reduce the drowning rates.

Mike mentioned that entities will sometimes cover the cost of the actual training but not the pay while they are in the training as that would be cost prohibited since the certification is owned by the individual and not the facility,

Mike- can we add the gambling bill for lifeguard and WSI training to subsidize training and relief for low-income families for swim lessons, can that be applied to becoming a lifeguard.

There are facilities that offer ways to pay for lifeguarding. They are still having issues to get people into programs. There is a need to be more resourceful to see what the actual obstacles are who is working to provide programs.

Please send any questions for the town halls

Aug 28, 30, 31

Sept 5,6,7

Spread across the state.

This may be a tough deadline as it was Labor Day weekend and there also needs to be announced. If people have suggestions on dates, please reach out to Brian directly.

Goal C: Partnerships - Gwen, Kate - Reporting 8/25/2023.

Discussion: Residential Codes for Backyard pools

Tim Shay recommended a conversation with Brian from Codes and is willing to speak if we provide a list of questions and things, we would like to know from their office.

Can add links to codes, and regulations in Part C (Partnerships) and E (Awareness) of the commission scope to address instruction that is not being included in code 6.1 and what level of supervision and training we expect for backyard pools public swimming lessons.

Marrick has learned that some towns allow a penalty fee in lieu of putting a fence around the pool immediately- there is also a question on standardization of building and installation.

Does this apply to our scope? It is happening and should be considered and make recommendation on how to be a designated water watcher. Can certainly be included in point C for the clearinghouse page for parent information. It also can be included in the awareness part of the scope. Kevin commented that it is good that we are expanding into other areas that were not considered when the commission first began.

Discussion around including insurance company involvement and that there is benefit in hearing from the codes.

Discussion around whether lessons in backyard pools really fit within the scope of the commission or if it more appropriate to add to the final recommendation report that this should be for future consideration.

Define Terms: Glossary of Terms to create a common state-wide vocabulary; other suggestions for words to be added to the list.

Added words from the national water safety action plan as well as added some of the words from DEI and added to the glossary. I did not add under-resourced.

Added Blue Economy.

Words taken directly from US National Water Safety Action Plan: adaptive aquatics, natural water, barrier, isolation fencing, PFD, Residential Pool

Words taken directly from Dr. Lynch: Ableism, Age, Disability, Diversity, Equity, Ethnicity, Gender, Historically Excluded, Inclusion, Marginalization, Race, Religion, Sexual Orientation

Need to add the information on what is entailed with being a designated Water Watcher.

11:20 For the Good of the Group
Game Plan for next meeting - 8/25/2023.
Goal C
Goal E depending on Heidi's return.
Goal B Town Hall discussion
Brian from Building and Codes scheduled.
Bill Kent for September 8th

11:30 Adjourned
Upcoming Events: Guest Speakers
8/25/2023:
9/8/2023: Bill Kent - organized by Bobby Hazen